

News story: Defence Minister announces helicopter work will stay in the UK

Options had been considered to relocate the fabrication work for future AW159 helicopters orders – the export version of the Wildcat helicopters already in service with the British Army and Royal Navy – overseas.

After careful joint analysis with the Ministry of Defence, Leonardo Helicopters in Yeovil has confirmed that it will carry out all future fabrication for the AW159 helicopter in the UK, with much of this work being undertaken at its Somerset facility – an agreement that will sustain 40 highly skilled jobs across the UK-based supply chain.

Wildcat is a highly versatile aircraft, capable of a wide a range of tasks over land and sea. The Royal Navy's maritime Wildcat forms the core of the UK's Frigate and Destroyer aviation capability and performs tasks including Anti-Surface and Submarine Warfare, force protection, transport and the vital information, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance (ISTAR) role. Similarly, the Army variant performs reconnaissance, command and control, force protection, and transport roles in a wide variety of environments.

Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin said:

I am delighted that a solution for UK-based fabrication for the AW159 helicopter has been identified between the MOD and Leonardo Helicopters. An agreement that secures Yeovil as the home of AW159 and Wildcat production and maintenance in the UK.

This work has not only helped sustain 40 of highly skilled jobs within the UK, but will act as a positive boost for the company and, through improved cost-effectiveness, their export customers. I would also like to pay tribute to Marcus Fysh MP, who has worked tirelessly to secure this great result.

Over a decade ago the MOD bought, as part of the 2006 Wildcat (then Future Lynx) demonstration and manufacturing contract, a number of specialised jigs and tooling for the fabrication of the AW159 Wildcat Helicopters. These essential parts are used to ensure airframe alignment, mould, patterns and manufacturing tools and gauges. These will now be used by Leonardo to carry out the fabrication work in the UK.

The MOD's continuing commitment to the Wildcat was also highlighted earlier this year, when a [£271 million five year deal](#) was signed to deliver a range of support and training services for the UK's entire fleet of 62 AW159 Wildcat helicopters, securing 500 jobs at Leonardo's facilities in Yeovil and Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton.

Press release: Foreign Secretary arrives in Sydney for AUKMIN 2017

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson arrives in Australia to attend the annual meeting of UK and Australian Foreign and Defence Ministers

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson arrives in Australia today (Tuesday 25 July 2017) to attend AUKMIN, the annual meeting of UK and Australian Foreign and Defence Ministers, which will take place on Thursday. The Secretaries of State will discuss regional security and defence, East Asia, the future of Europe, terrorism and promoting our common values.

During the visit he will also:

- Meet with Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop, to discuss the bilateral relationship, cyber security and the Commonwealth
- Deliver the Lowy Institute's annual Lowy Lecture on Thursday evening, speaking about the UK-Australia relationship, Britain in Asia and Britain in the world
- Take a tour of the Sydney Opera House, and meet with representatives of UK company Laing O'Rourke, who are currently refurbishing the Opera House
- Visit the Tyro Fintech hub, to promote collaboration between the UK and Australian fintech sectors
- Meet with the leaders of top UK investors in Australia, and with major Australian investors in the UK to discuss UK-Australia trade and business opportunities

The Foreign Secretary said:

The bonds of kinship between Britain and Australia are deep and enduring. It is fantastic to be back in Australia, my first time as Foreign Secretary. Our relationship is based on shared history, interests and values, with large numbers of our nationals making each other's countries home.

I look forward to strengthening even further our partnerships on

global challenges and opportunities, such as North Korea, the fight against extremism and terror, modern slavery and trade. Talks with businesses and government on boosting trade between us when we leave the EU will also be at the top of agenda. I can't wait to catch up with old friends and to make new ones.

The Foreign Secretary's visit to Australia is the last stop in a three country trip. He held two days of positive talks in Japan last week, before moving on to New Zealand and finally Australia.

Further information

News story: Chief of the Defence Staff strengthens bonds with India

Under the umbrella of the 2015 Defence and International Security Partnership (DISP), Sir Stuart met senior Indian military figures, including the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC), currently Admiral Sunil Lanba; the Chief of the Army Staff, General Bipin Rawat; and the General Officer Commanding in Chief Eastern Command, Lieutenant General Praveen Bakshi. Sir Stuart also met with the Indian Defence minister, Shri Arun Jaitley, and the National Security Advisor, Shri Ajit Doval.

Sir Stuart's exchanges centred on the continued growing defence relationship through the recently established Capability Partnerships, the joint threats of terrorism and extremism faced globally, upcoming exercises and UN Peacekeeping among other topics.

UK Chief of the Defence Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach said:

My interactions with the civilian and political officials have served to underpin our already strong bonds. Our shared values provide a platform on which, as partners, we can contribute to regional and global security and jointly develop cutting edge capabilities for our armed forces. Whether beating terror, securing peace and stability through better peacekeeping or sharing operational knowledge and technology, as defence partners, we are world beaters.

The Chief of the Defence Staff visited Delhi and Kolkata over four days. In addition to meetings with senior military and civilian officials, he laid a wreath at India Gate in commemoration of the 74,000 Indians who served and died in the First World War.

Chief of Defence Staff Sir Stuart Peach presents a memento to Admiral Sunil Lanba PVSM AVSM ADC, Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC).
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Sir Stuart also interacted with students at the prestigious National Defence College, India's principal establishment for strategic learning for senior Indian and selected international Defence officers. His trip was completed by a visit to the Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd, the premier Warship building Company in India.

The UK's and India's Armed Forces continue to benefit from a close relationship and Sir Stuart's visit fortifies this. Both countries' Armed Forces are undergoing a transformation in some guise and the learning experiences from each other in areas like the joint aircraft carrier projects, to combatting terrorism, develops best practice between global partners.

News story: New Director Generals to head HMRC's Customer Services and Customer Compliance Groups

Angela MacDonald, currently Operational Excellence Director in HMRC, will step up to lead the Customer Services Group, which oversees most of HMRC's interaction with individual taxpayers, tax credits recipients, and small and mid-sized businesses online, by phone or face-to-face.

Penny Ciniewicz, currently Chief Executive of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), will now return to HMRC to lead the Customer Compliance Group, which includes compliance for all customer groups, from large businesses to individuals, as well as HMRC's counter-avoidance and fraud investigation functions.

Melissa Tatton, currently Director for Individuals and Small Business Compliance, HMRC, will step up to take over as Chief Executive for the VOA.

Approved by the Prime Minister, these appointments follow an extensive competition across the Civil Service and public and private sectors.

Chief Executive, Jon Thompson, said:

I'd like to congratulate Melissa, Penny and Angela on their appointments, and am delighted to welcome them to HMRC's Executive Committee. They bring a wealth of capability, leadership and experience with them, and will have vital roles to play in helping

build our future and achieve our vision of becoming a world-class organisation.

Melissa Tatton said:

I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to lead the Valuation Office Agency, given its strong delivery track record, as it continues to transform, and to be joining HMRC's Executive Committee.

Penny Ciniewicz said:

It's a privilege to be returning to HMRC after nearly eight years as Chief Executive for the VOA. I'm delighted to have the opportunity to build on the work of Jennie Granger in ensuring we reduce the tax gap and promote compliance, ensuring we bring in the money that pays for the UK's public services.

Angela MacDonald said:

As Operational Excellence Director, I see firsthand the commitment and passion among our people for delivering high-quality customer service. This is a fantastic opportunity and it is a privilege to follow in Ruth Owen's footsteps, investing in and building the best service we can for all our customers, now and in the future.

Angela will take up the DG Customer Services Group appointment on 7 August. Penny and Melissa will take up the DG Customer Compliance Group and Chief Executive, VOA, appointments on 4 September, respectively.

1. Penny Ciniewicz was appointed Chief Executive, Valuation Office Agency in September 2009, having joined HMRC in 2006. Her previous posts include:
 - Director of Knowledge, Analysis and Intelligence, HMRC (2007-2009)
 - Principal Private Secretary to the Cabinet Secretary, Cabinet Office (2004-2006)
 - Director Aerospace and Defence, Department for Trade and Industry (2002-2004)
2. Angela MacDonald was appointed Director for Operational Excellence, HMRC in January 2017. Her previous posts include:
 - Operational Excellence Director, Department for Work and Pensions (2013-17)
 - Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission (2009-13)
 - Before joining the Civil Service, Angela worked in the Financial Services Industry, gaining experience across a broad range of roles.
3. Melissa joined the Inland Revenue as a graduate tax inspector and has

forged a successful career as a tax leader across a wide range of roles. Melissa was appointed to her current post as Director for Individuals and Small Business Compliance in 2014. Before that she held the following posts:

- Director, Large Business Service (LBS), HMRC (2011-14)
- Deputy Director, Business International, HMRC (2009-11)
- Melissa was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in June 2016.

News story: New Chief Executive appointed to lead Valuation Office Agency

Melissa Tatton has been appointed on promotion to head up the Valuation Office Agency.

The Valuation Office Agency, an executive agency of HM Revenue and Customs, is responsible for providing the government with the valuations and property advice needed to support taxation and benefits.

This follows the appointment of current Chief Executive, Penny Ciniewicz, as new Director General for Customer Compliance at HMRC.

HMRC Chief Executive, Jon Thompson said:

I'd like to congratulate Melissa on this important appointment. The Valuation Office Agency plays a vital role in providing the valuations and property advice required to support taxation and benefits. I look forward to Melissa joining the Executive Committee, and to becoming a valued member of the leadership team".

Melissa Tatton said:

I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to lead the Valuation Office Agency as it continues to invest in and improve its services, and to be joining HMRC's Executive Committee. It's vital that VOA customers continue to have confidence in its valuations and advice, and I'm honoured to build on the excellent work that Penny Ciniewicz has led over the past eight years.

Melissa will take up her new role from 4 September.

Melissa joined the Inland Revenue as a graduate tax inspector and has forged a successful career as a tax leader across a wide range of roles. Melissa was appointed to her current post as Director for Individuals and Small Business Compliance in 2014. Before that she held the following posts:

- Director, Large Business Service (LBS), HMRC (2011-14)
- Deputy Director, Business International, HMRC (2009-11)
- Melissa was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in June 2016